

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5859
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 09785

USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: ELAB, ,INT, ECON, SP
SUBJECT: LABOR/POLITICAL SCENE: VIEWS OF LABOR UNDER-
SECRETARY

1. SUMMARY. LABOR UNDERSECRETARY HARGUINDEY BELIEVES THAT
THE SETTING OF GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IS A
MAJOR PREOCCUATION IN THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS FIELD,
WHICH WILL ALSO SHAPE THE SPANISH TRADE UNION PANORAMA FOR
THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. A NEW "SOCIAL PACT" IS NECESSARY
IF THE NATION IS TO HAVE THE TRANQUILITY IT NEEDS FOL-
LOWING THE APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION. MOST SPANISH
WORKERS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN BREAD-AND-BUTTER THAN
POLITICAL TRADE UNIONISM, BUT ANY THIRD NON-MARXIST MAIN-
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STREAM LABOR MOVEMENT MUST SPRING FROM THE BASE AND NOT BE
CREATED FROM THE TOP. HARGUINDEY APPEARS FULLY ATTUNED TO
THE POLITICAL GIVE AND TAKE WHICH CHARACTERIZES THE LABOR
RELATIONS FIELD AT THIS STAGE OF THE SPANISH TRANSITION
TO DEMOCRACY. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING COURSE OF CALL ON LABOR UNDERSECRETARY GERARDO

HARGUINDEY (ALSO UCD SENATOR FROM LUGO) TO DISCUSS ILO DEVELOPMENTS (SEPTTEL), LABATT TOOK OPPORTUNITY REVIEW GENERAL LABOR/POLITICAL SCENE. HIGHLIGHTS OF HARGUINDEY'S COMMENTS ARE REPORTED BELOW.

3. GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. HARGUINDEY AGREED WITH THE ASSESSMENT OF THE EMPLOYERS (MADRID 9704) THAT THIS IS A MAJOR PREOCCUPATION IN THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS FIELD. THE GOVT HAS DRAFT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LEGISLATION READY TO GO, BUT HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER THEY SHOULD GO THE CORTES ROUTE (WITH ALL ITS POLITICAL PITFALLS) OR ISSUE IT AS A DECREE LAW. HE STATED THAT THE GOVT HAS ALREADY HELD PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS WITH BOTH LABOR AND MANAGEMENT. THE REACTION OF THE LATTER TO THE TEXT HAD BEEN "REASONABLY FAVORABLE", AND THAT OF LABOR ONLY "FAIR". HE SPECULATED THAT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS ON THIS MATTER MIGHT WELL OCCUR UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF COMING CONSULTATIONS ON A NEW MONCLOA PACT (SEE BELOW). THE UNDERSECRETARY SAW THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LEGISLATION AS A BILL WHICH WOULD TO A CERTAIN EXTENT SHAPE THE SPANISH TRADE UNION PANORAMA FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. RATHER THAN CATERING TO THE PREMISE THAT TRADE UNIONISM HERE IS BASICALLY BIPOLAR AND MARXIST IN NATURE (I.E. CONTROLLED BY THE SOCIALIST UGT AND THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CC.OO.), THE LEGISLATION LEAVES THE DOOR OPEN FOR OTHER TRADE UNIONS

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TO ENTER INTO THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCESS IF THEY CAN MUSTER TEN PERCENT OF THE WORKERS IN A BARGAINING UNIT.

4. A NEW "SOCIAL PACT"? HARGUINDEY DID NOT BELIEVE THE MONCLOA PACT SHOULD BE RENEWED AS SUCH. ANY FUTURE AGREEMENT SHOULD RATHER BE BASED UPON THE RATIONALE THAT THE NATION WOULD NEED A PERIOD OF TRANQUILITY FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION, AND THIS WOULD REQUIRE THE COOPERATION OF BOTH LABOR AND MANAGEMENT. UNLIKE THE MONCLOA PACT WHICH HAD BEEN A "POLITICAL AGREEMENT" IN EFFECT NEGOTIATED BEHIND THE BACKS OF THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE EMPLOYERS, ANY NEW ACCORD SHOULD BE IN THE NATURE OF A "SOCIAL AGREEMENT", WITH THE POLITICAL PARTIES MORE IN THE BACKGROUND THAN THE LAST TIME AROUND. HE SAW THE ISSUES OF THE "NATIONALITIES" (I.E. REGIONAL AUTONOMY) AND TERRORISM AS CURRENTLY THE FOREMOST POLITICAL PROBLEMS, AND WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT BOTH LABOR AND MANAGEMENT -- AS UNORGANIZED AND UNDISCIPLINED AS THEY STILL WERE -- WOULD REACT IN A RESPONSIBLE MANNER TO GOVT ATTEMPTS TO KEEP THINGS QUIET AND ON AN EVEN KEEL.

5. A CABINET RESHUFFLE? THE UCD SENATOR SAID THAT THE APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION SHOULD BRING AN END TO CONSENSUS POLITICS, WHICH HAD BENEFITED THE OPPOSITION PARTIES MORE THAN THE UCD. HE DID NOT SEE HOW SUAREZ COULD AVOID A MAJOR CABINET RESHUFFLE. IT WAS HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT SUAREZ SHOULD NOT WAIT FOR THE REFERENDUM ON THE CONSTITUTION, BUT SHOULD INSTITUTE THE CABINET SHAKEUP IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CORTES APPROVAL (WHICH HE ESTIMATED WOULD BE FORTHCOMING IN ONE MONTH'S TIME). THE NEW TEAM MUST BE A YOUNG ONE, CLOSE TO SUAREZ, AND ABLE TO "GOVERN" -- SOMETHING THE CURRENT GROUP

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CORRECTED COPY PARA 6 LINE 12 ADDED

USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

COULD NOT DO EFFECTIVELY. THE NEW CABINET SHOULD BE A PURELY UCD ONE, WITH NO OUTSIDE ELEMENTS FROM EITHER LEFT OR RIGHT, HE SAID.

6. A THIRD LABOR MOVEMENT. HARGUINDEY SAW THE PROPOSED AND PENDING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LEGISLATION AS A REAL INCENTIVE FOR INDEPENDENT SPLINTER LABOR ELEMENTS TO UNITE

IN ORDER TO WIN A PLACE AT THE BARGAINING TABLE. THEY MUST CERTAINLY RECOGNIZE THAT THE RAISON D'ETRE OF ANY UNION IS TO BE ABLE TO BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERSHIP, AND THAT THEY CAN ONLY DO THIS BY UNITING. THUS, ARTURO MOYA'S AND THE UCD'S EFFORTS (MADRID 8590)
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SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THIS END. THE UNDERSECRETARY WAS CONVINCED THAT MOST SPANISH WORKERS WERE MORE INTERESTED IN BREAD-AND-BUTTER THAN IN POLITICAL (ESPECIALLY MARXIST) TRADE UNIONISM. HOWEVER, ANY NEW THIRD MAIN-STREAM LABOR MOVEMENT MUST SPRING FROM THE BASE, NOT FROM THE TOP -- AND SHOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE "CREATED" BY THE UCD.

7. COMMENTS. THE IMPRESSIVE 41-YEAR OLD HARGUINDEY WAS BROUGHT IN AS A MEMBER OF THE NEW LABOR TEAM IN MARCH 1978 TOGETHER WITH LABOR MINISTER CALVO ORTEGA. BOTH ARE UCD SENATORS. BY TRADITION, THE LABOR UNDERSECRETARY ALSO HEADS THE SPANISH DELEGATION TO THE ILO. THE UNDER-SECRETARY -- AS HIS CHIEF, CALVO ORTEGA -- APPEARS FULLY ATTUNED TO THE POLITICAL GIVE AND TAKE WHICH CHARACTERIZES THE LABOR RELATIONS FIELD AT THIS STAGE OF THE SPANISH TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY. FURTHERMORE, AS A MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITTEE OF UNDER-SECRETARIES (CHARGED WITH DEVELOPING THE AGENDAS FOR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETINGS), HE HAS AN INSIDE TRACK WITH RESPECT TO GAUGING THE PRIORITY OF ISSUES FACING THE GOVERNMENT AT A GIVEN TIME. HARGUINDEY AND CALVO ORTEGA ARE WORKING TO ACHIEVE A SITUATION WHERE THE GOVERNMENT CAN SIT BACK AND, AT MOST, CONCILIATE BETWEEN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT. HOWEVEE, THIS IS A GOAL WHICH WILL NOT BE REALIZED FOR SOME TIME, AND IN THE MEANTIME, THE GOVT WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS. TODMAN

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